

Tuesday 10/13/20

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'What's Wrong With You?': US Man Attacks Local News Crew Filming COVID-19 Report - Video by [Gaby Arancibia](#)

Tennessee's Metropolitan Nashville Police Department is on the hunt for an unidentified individual who was filmed over the weekend attacking a photojournalist with the WSMV local news station.

The attack unfolded on Sunday in front of Nashville's Napier Elementary School, where broadcast journalist Caresse Jackman and a station photojournalist were filming for an upcoming segment, according to a [release published by WSMV](#).

Mediate [reported](#) that the segment the pair of journalists was working on focused on the efforts of [two local women to sew some 300 face masks for students](#) returning to in-person learning at the school.

Footage of the violent assault was captured on camera as the pair prepped for the station's feature story. Jackman is initially seen on video turning her attention to a red-shirted man aggressively approaching the scene, asking him if he's OK before the sudden attack.

"We never said a word to him. I got out of the car to record. He started to approach me," Jackman wrote of the incident in a Twitter post. "My photog tried to get his attention so he wouldn't come my way. The man then attacked us."

Video shows that after the man says "I told you" to the photojournalist, he immediately begins to grab onto the cameraman and his equipment as Jackman is heard urging the man to stop in the background.

In cellphone footage captured by Jackman, the attacker is seen pulling on the photojournalist's shirt before striking him in the face. Seconds later, the man appears to lose his balance and falls to the ground.

"That's what you get," Jackman yells out as the man sits in the middle of the street. "What's wrong with you? Leave him alone."

"Get back or I'm calling the police. You assaulted my partner; we can press charges against you. I hope you know that," she adds before joining the photojournalist inside the car.

Although the video cuts off with the pair back inside their vehicle as the man approaches them again, Jackman noted in a follow-up Twitter post that they were able to drive to a "safe location" to contact their station managers and notify the police of the incident. She also noted the pair were OK.

The station's release states that by the time police arrived at the scene, officials were not able to locate the offender. "News 4 believes the man lives or stays in that area," reads the statement.

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Jealous Pup Dances for Attention - Video Club

For one miniature pinscher living it up in Hai Phong, Vietnam, sharing the affection of his owner with another pup is a no-go, as he recently demonstrated.

Footage obtained by video licensor ViralHog captures the happy-go-lucky furball doing an adorable, trot-like dance to get much-wanted attention from his owner.

"This is a jealous dance of my dog," the mini pinscher's owner explained in a statement to the outlet. "He often dances like that when seeing me giving a hug to another dog. He looks really cute and funny dancing like that."

Whatever will he do if a sibling is brought home?

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'From Amazing to Insane': Photos, Radio Show Flurry of Activity at Secretive Nevada Test Range

by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

Recent satellite photos confirm what local radio operators have also noticed: the US military's top secret Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) has seen a considerable spike in activity over the last month, with lots of planes spotted that likely signal a new test or training event.

The [typically quiet facility deep in the Nevada desert](#) has seen an unusual flurry of activity since mid-September, especially at the Tonopah Test Range or "Area 52," which has long hosted experimental US military aircraft, most famously the F-117 Nighthawk.

Satellite photos from private imaging firm Planet Labs taken on September 23 spotted a slew of aircraft at the Tonopah facility's airport. Many of them are transports, including a C-17

Globemaster III military transport, a Gulfstream V business jet, [two "Janet" 737s that fly site workers to and from Las Vegas](#) and a Boeing 767 passenger airliner. Also spotted at the range was [the elusive C-32B, a modified Boeing 757 airliner](#) used by the CIA for special missions as well as ferrying the US government's Foreign Emergency Support Teams to crisis areas.

One of the F-117s can also be seen outside the hangar, parked as part of what [The Drive's The War Zone speculates is probably a photo shoot](#), since there are clearly rows of people posing in front of the stealthy strike aircraft. It's possible they might have been preparing for the send-off of jet number 833, nicknamed "Black Devil," [which was transferred from Tonopah to Palm Springs Air Museum](#) in California the following week.

alth aircraft parked in front of a hangar at Tonopah Test Range Airport on September 23, 2020
Tonopah's expansive runway, an extra-long 12,000 feet in length and 150 feet in width, can handle basically any aircraft ever built with the exception of the Space Shuttle, and the base has long played host to aircraft built by US adversaries, such as the Soviet Union and People's

Republic of China, that were acquired by Washington and its allies. Test pilots flew Soviet fighter jets against each other to learn their capabilities and practiced using the F-117 long before it ever saw combat.

More recently, [the RQ-170 Sentinel flying-wing stealth combat drone](#) has been known to fly from Tonopah.

However, what's going on now could be anybody's guess. One thing is for certain, however: September 23 wasn't an isolated busy day at Tonopah: radio interceptor Bryan Herbet told The War Zone for an October 9 story that "since the end of September, the radio traffic from NTTR went from amazing to insane."

"There was one night where radio traffic was non-stop until just after 3 a.m. The increase in activity isn't just limited to aircraft from Nellis [Air Force Base]. Known and unknown Groom Lake freqs have also been very active. Not just at night. They've been doing more flight tests during the day. My Nellis-Creech-NTTR freq list has over 100 freqs in it and in these last two weeks, I've found freqs in use that weren't already in my list. Its not often you hear ZLA [Los Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center] working multiple aircraft above FL600, especially above NTTR, but they've been doing it," Herbert added.

The War Zone also noted that on October 7, the mysterious RAT55, a grotesque-looking Boeing 737 with huge radomes and infrared scanners bulging out the sides, [was recorded flying in the area](#).

[Jalopnik reported that RAT55 is used to judge the precise capabilities](#) and limitations of stealth technologies and the aircraft they're applied to. Perhaps this could signal new attention being paid to the RQ-170, or some as-yet unknown stealth aircraft?

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Syrian Militants Delivered Chlorine Barrels to Stage Provocation in Idlib - Russian Military by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

According to Russian military officials in Syria, Islamic militants in Idlib Governorate have delivered several barrels of chlorine to the White Helmets in preparation for a new provocation. On Tuesday, Rear Adm. Alexander Grinkevich, deputy head of the Russian Defense Ministry's Center for Syrian Reconciliation, reported in a daily briefing that the center had evidence Islamist rebels in Idlib were preparing a new provocation using chlorine in Sfhon, a village in southern Idlib Governorate.

"The Russian Reconciliation Center has received information about the preparation by militants of illegal armed groups of another attempt to organize a provocation using poisonous substances in the southern part of the Idlib de-escalation zone to accuse the Syrian government forces of using chemical weapons against civilians," Grinkevich said. He added that the White Helmets, a group with known links to al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups fighting against the Syrian government, had also arrived in Sfhon.

Tuesday's report is [just the latest incident](#) of rebels in Idlib [attempting to stage such an incident](#). Supposed use of chemical weapons in the civil war by Damascus has repeatedly been used by

Western powers as an excuse to attack the Syrian government, either through international pressure or airstrikes.

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Russia Shuttters US' 'Agreement in Principle,' Calls Proposed New START Extension 'Unacceptable'
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

According to reports, the United States has "agreement in principle" with Russia to extend the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), a nuclear weapons treaty that is set to expire in February 2021. However, Moscow has pushed back, saying no such agreement exists.

According to Marshall Billingslea, the US' Special Presidential Envoy for Arms Control, Washington and Moscow have reached a tentative agreement on extending New START, which is set to expire in February 2021.

"We are in fact willing to extend the New START Treaty for some period of time provided that they in return agree to a limitation or freeze on their nuclear arsenal. We are willing to do the same," Billingslea said. He did not say for how long New START would be extended.

[Moscow has long pushed for an extension without preconditions](#), but has argued there is no longer enough time for a renegotiation of the treaty itself.

In response to Billingslea's statement, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Washington's position on freezing nuclear arsenals was "unacceptable." He said Moscow would refuse any agreement on New START that was timed to coincide with the November 3 US presidential election, when US President Donald Trump will stand for re-election.

Signed in Prague, Czech Republic, in April 2010, New START called for halving the number of strategic missile launchers possessed by Russia and the United States and set up new inspection regimes for verifying the process. However, unlike the original START, which expired in 2009, New START places no limitation on the number of nuclear weapons either power can possess.

Agreeing to extend the treaty rather than let it expire marks a change of course for the Trump administration, which has made a habit of withdrawing the US from arms control agreements.

[Early in his presidency, Trump maligned the treaty as](#) "one of several bad deals negotiated by the Obama administration." Other international deals Trump has taken the US out of include the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), better known as the Iran nuclear deal; the 1992 Treaty on Open Skies; and the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

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Pentagon Drafting Plans to Withdraw US Troops From Somalia - Reports
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

According to insider reports, US President Donald Trump has ordered the Pentagon and his senior national security advisers to begin drafting plans for a total withdrawal of US forces from Somalia. The US has between 650 and 800 troops in the war-torn East African nation, where it has waged an undeclared war since 2007.

"People familiar with the matter" told Bloomberg on Tuesday that the Pentagon had begun drafting plans to pull all US troops out of Somalia.

After a disastrous intervention in the Somali Civil War in 1992, the US withdrew some 25,000 troops from Somalia. While a small number of special forces and counterterrorism advisers remained, the air war opened up by US Africa Command (AFRICOM) against al-Qaeda affiliate al-Shabaab in 2007 did not involve ground forces until relatively recently.

In March 2017, [Trump declared Somalia an "area of active hostilities."](#) signaling an increase in tempo that soon [saw more than 600 US troops dispatched](#) to the area. Now, however, it seems Trump may be considering bringing them home, just his latest attempt to deliver on a 2016 campaign promise to end the "era of endless wars" before he stands for reelection in November. According to the Bloomberg report, US national security adviser Robert O'Brien, Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Mark Milley have all been part of the talks.

Trump and his advisers being on the same page is not always something that can be taken for granted, as the recent disparate estimates about the US' withdrawal from Afghanistan have shown.

[Last Wednesday, O'Brien said the US would have just 2,500 troops](#) in the Central Asian nation by early 2021, with the goal of bringing all US troops home by May 2021. [However, just hours later, Trump tweeted that in fact,](#) all US troops would come home from Afghanistan by Christmas 2020.

Future for Drone War Unclear

Even if all US troops leave Somalia, that does not mean an end to the undeclared drone war the US has waged against al-Shabaab since 2007. The unmanned aerial vehicles and the spy planes that spot targets for them and monitor the aftermath of a strike fly from neighboring countries like Kenya.

This air war has suffered contradictory trends of both increasing and decreasing scrutiny: [even as the Trump administration revises its standards](#) to effectively ignore the possibility of civilian casualties resulting from the strikes, [increased pressure from nongovernmental organizations](#) (NGOs) like Amnesty International has forced the Pentagon to admit that innocent people do get killed in these strikes and to [present quarterly reports reviewing them](#) for possible civilian deaths [According to data collected by Airwars](#), an NGO affiliated with the University of London, since 2007, AFRICOM has carried out some 235 airstrikes in Somalia and killed between 1,807 and 2,422 al-Shabaab fighters. However, AFRICOM has admitted to just five civilian deaths, while the academics found evidence of between 72 and 145 civilians killed in that time.

Still, just last month, [AFRICOM was pushing to expand the air war into Kenya](#) in reaction to al-Shabaab increasingly crossing the border, as they did in January when they mounted an attack on Manda Bay, one such base from which the air war is waged.

Debate Over Where Troops Are Needed

There remains considerable debate about whether or not the Trump administration's push to withdraw troops not only from Somalia, but the entire AFRICOM area of responsibility, is a wise policy. The Pentagon has justified plans [to shift significant numbers of the roughly 5,000 US troops in Africa](#) to other theaters based on [prioritizing "inter-state strategic competition" with Russia and China](#) instead of the War on Terror.

In January, [Esper told reporters he was concerned with "mission number one."](#) competing with Russia and China, but lawmakers such as Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA), who chairs the House Armed Services Committee, have pushed back, saying the move would allow terrorist groups like al-Shabaab, which have staged huge, deadly massacres of civilians, room to grow once more.

On the other side of the coin, [Army Gen. Stephen Townsend, who commands AFRICOM](#), has argued that keeping US troops in Africa is also a way to fight Russia and China, because it denies them opportunities to expand their influence there.

Despite the war's destruction, the central government in Mogadishu has signaled it wants US troops to stay for now. Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi told Bloomberg, "We really appreciate the US support, and we are grateful for what the US has done, and we would like to see the troops remain until the work is 100% accomplished."

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DoJ Ignores Trump Call to Declassify All Russiagate Docs After Failing to Receive Official Order by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

Lawyers from the US Department of Justice told a federal judge on Tuesday the department had no intention of totally declassifying documents related to the Russiagate investigation, despite US President Donald Trump's tweets to that effect, since it hadn't been given an official order to release unredacted files.

On October 6, Trump tweeted he had "fully authorized the total Declassification of any & all documents pertaining to" the FBI's investigation of alleged collusion between Trump's 2016 presidential election campaign and the Russian government. The investigation, which presented its findings in a two-volume March 2019 report, found no evidence a crime had been committed, prompting a counter-investigation by the Department of Justice into why such a probe had been launched to begin with.

The day before Trump's tweet, Director of National Intelligence (DNI) John Ratcliffe had declassified [a handwritten memo by former CIA Director John Brennan that suggests](#) the existence of a purported plan by Hillary Clinton, Trump's Democratic rival in the 2016 election, [to "tie" Trump to Russia in an attempt to make him lose](#) the race.

However, despite Trump's Twitter decree, no formal command was given to actually begin the process of declassifying, without redactions, more than 4,000 pages of FBI reports related to Russiagate, [DoJ lawyers claimed in court on Tuesday](#).

"The President's recent statements on Twitter referencing the 'declassification' of information were not an order to the Department of Justice to declassify the materials in this case," DoJ lawyers said in a Tuesday filing to the District Court for the District of Columbia in response to a lawsuit by BuzzFeed reporter Jason Leopold and CNN to obtain the files.

"The Twitter statements do not constitute a self-executing declassification order," they said.

"Indeed, they provide no more authority to the Department to declassify material that the Presidential Memorandum giving the Attorney General authority to declassify information that the President signed on May 23, 2019. As with that memorandum, the President's Twitter statements do not require the declassification of any particular documents and have not resulted in the declassification of any FD-302s [FBI interview summaries] at issue in this case."

The DoJ further notes it "was further informed that the President's statements on Twitter do not require altering any redactions on any record at issue in this case, including but not limited to, any redactions taken pursuant to any discretionary FOIA [Freedom of Information Act] exemptions."

In other words, ignore what Trump said.

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Vitamin D Deficiency Linked to Increased Risk for COVID-19 - Israeli Health Body

Israel's Coronavirus National Information and Knowledge Center revealed Monday that vitamin D deficiency might be linked to an increased risk of contracting COVID-19.

According to the center's report, published Monday and reviewed by the [Jerusalem Post](#), research studies have shown a circumstantial link between vitamin D levels and the risk of contracting the novel coronavirus. Despite the lack of a known causal relationship between the vitamin and COVID-19 risk, the center still recommends that people take vitamin D supplements.

Following the publication of its report, the Coronavirus National Information and Knowledge Center launched a communications campaign to inform the public about the benefits of vitamin D.

The center recommends spending at least 20 minutes in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. daily or taking a supplement of 800 to 1,000 international units of vitamin D daily for individuals who fall under the "normal or healthy weight" category on the body mass index.

However, those considered overweight or obese by the index may require a higher dosage. The Israeli Health Ministry has been recommending that people take vitamin D since the start of the pandemic.

This is not the first report to suggest there may be a link between contracting COVID-19 and vitamin D deficiency.

In September, a [retrospective study](#) by the University of Chicago found a similar association.

In the study, researchers evaluated 489 patients whose vitamin D levels were measured within a year before being tested for the novel coronavirus.

The researchers concluded that patients with untreated vitamin D deficiency were almost twice as likely to test positive for the virus compared to patients who were not deficient in the vitamin. "Vitamin D is important to the function of the immune system, and vitamin D supplements have previously been shown to lower the risk of viral respiratory tract infections," David Meltzer, lead author of the study, [said in a news release](#). "Our statistical analysis suggests this may be true for the COVID-19 infection."

According to the University of Chicago, around half of all Americans are deficient in vitamin D, with high deficiency rates among African Americans, Hispanic Americans and others living in places like Chicago, Illinois, where getting enough sun during the winter months is difficult.

"Understanding whether treating vitamin D deficiency changes COVID-19 risk could be of great importance locally, nationally and globally," Meltzer said. "Vitamin D is inexpensive, generally very safe to take and can be widely scaled."

However, the [latest recommendation](#) by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that there is "insufficient data to recommend either for or against the use of vitamin D for the prevention or treatment of COVID-19."

"Some investigational trials on the use of vitamin D in people with COVID-19 are being planned or are already accruing participants. These trials will administer vitamin D alone or in combination with other agents to participants with and without vitamin D deficiency," the CDC adds.

A new [study](#) published in late August also suggested that vitamin B may be important in preventing or reducing COVID-19 symptoms.

The study, published by researchers at the University of Oxford, United Arab Emirates University and the University of Melbourne, found that vitamin B may play a role in modulating immune response by reducing inflammation, which may reduce the damage caused by the coronavirus.

The [latest data by Worldometer](#) shows that almost 300,000 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Israel, with more than 2,000 associated deaths.

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Trump Files Emergency Request With US Supreme Court to Shield Tax Records

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday requested that the US Supreme Court block a lower court ruling that would have provided the Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr.'s office access to years of his income tax returns.

The newly filed emergency request by Trump's lawyers is a so-called stay or suspension of a grand jury subpoena requesting the president's tax returns. The stay is pending the filing of a writ of certiorari by Trump asking the Supreme Court to review the appeals court decision on the basis that the subpoena is "overbroad" and lacks a "good faith basis," [NBC News reported](#).

Trump's lawyers have also said that the Supreme Court could treat the stay issuance as a petition for the writ and then overturn the appeals court decision after granting the writ. Trump's legal team has argued that a suspension is necessary because there are "intensely factual" grounds for the Supreme Court to reverse the appeals court decision.

According to [Trump's lawyers](#), "the subpoena was plausibly issued in bad faith if the District Attorney copied a congressional subpoena with no good-faith effort to properly tailor it to his investigative needs."

"Even if the President's allegations about the scope of the grand jury's investigation could be rejected at this stage, the President still plausibly alleges overbreadth and bad faith, given the subpoena's limitless reach and the District Attorney's shifting rationales for issuing it," they added.

However, Vance could obtain the requested documents, which include eight years of tax returns for an investigation into hush money payments and other transactions, if the Supreme Court denies the stay. The investigation was launched after it was revealed that Trump's former lawyer Michael Cohen paid [adult film star Stormy Daniels](#) \$130,000 to not reveal her alleged 2006 affair with Trump.

In 2018, Cohen pleaded guilty to eight federal crimes, including campaign finance violations. During his admissions in court, Cohen said that the Trump Organization occasionally lied about its finances to evade taxes or obtain favorable loan terms, and that hush money payments made to Daniels and [Karen McDougal](#), a former Playboy model who also claims to have had an affair with the president, were coordinated by Trump to influence the election, [Vox reported](#). Last summer, the Supreme Court rejected Trump's argument that his records from the Mazars USA accounting firm should not be released because of his presidential status. However, the high court did say that Trump could make arguments against the subpoena before a federal district court in Manhattan, [CNBC reported](#).

Trump has repeatedly refused to disclose his tax returns to the public.

The New York Times published an [article](#) last month revealing that the president paid only \$750 in federal income taxes in 2016 and 2017 and did not pay any income taxes in 10 of the preceding 15 years. The article was based on more than two decades' worth of tax-return data related to Trump and the Trump Organization.

FBI: Militia Plotters Considered Kidnapping Virginia Governor Over COVID-19 Lockdown

An FBI agent testified Tuesday that two of the men accused of plotting to kidnap Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer also participated in discussions earlier this year with members of anti-government groups about potentially abducting Virginia Governor Ralph Northam.

During a hearing Tuesday in a federal court in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for six men charged with conspiring to kidnap Whitmer, FBI Special Agent Richard Trask said that two of the defendants, Adam Fox and Barry Croft, attended a meeting in June in Dublin, Ohio, with militia groups. Seven other men face state-level terrorism charges in relation to the Whitmer plot.

"They discussed possible targets, taking a sitting governor, specifically issues with the governor of Michigan and Virginia based on the lockdown orders," Trask said, also adding that the people at the Ohio meeting were unhappy with the governors' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, [AP reported](#).

In a Tuesday news conference, Northam said he was not going to discuss the plot and said that he and his family feel safe with the security provided by state police.

"I'm continuing my work for the commonwealth as I would any other day," he added, AP reported.

In a Tuesday statement, US Secretary of Homeland Security Chad Wolf addressed the attempted kidnappings. "I applaud state and federal law enforcement successful efforts to thwart the plan of violent extremists to kidnap Governor Whitmer of Michigan and Governor Northam of Virginia. Last week, we released the DHS Homeland Threat Assessment that outlines this very threat. There is no place in our society for violent extremists in any form - we will stand against them at every turn," [he said](#).

During the Ohio meeting, Croft and Fox allegedly discussed various kidnapping plots like storming the Michigan Capitol, eventually deciding to try to kidnap Whitmer at her vacation lake home. The defendants also allegedly carried out military-style training exercises to prepare for the kidnapping and even cased Whitmer's vacation home twice to determine how to kidnap her. Five of the six men federally charged in the alleged plot, Fox, Ty Garbin, Kaleb Franks, Brandon Caserta and Daniel Harris, were all in court on Tuesday. Croft is being held in Delaware. Detention hearings for Fox and Garbin are scheduled for Friday.

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Washington State Repeatedly Fails to Locate Asian Giant Hornet Nests Ahead of 'Slaughter Phase'

by [Evan Craighead](#)

Scientists in the state of Washington have announced that they were again unsuccessful in live-tracking an Asian giant hornet - or "murder hornet" - to locate and destroy its nest and quell the species' spread in the US.

Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) officials [held a virtual news conference](#) on Monday to discuss their tracking of an Asian giant hornet and answer questions about their efforts.

State scientists revealed that an entomologist had attempted to use dental floss to tie a tracking device to a female "murder hornet" previously captured on October 5. Unfortunately, the tracker's signal was lost shortly after the insect traveled through a collection of blackberry bushes.

Responding to an inquiry issued by a Whatcom County resident, WSDA entomologist Sven [Spichiger explained](#) that "there's definitely at least two nests" in the county, which has yielded a number of specimens for the state.

A total of 18 Asian giant hornets have been captured across Washington since late last year, according to officials.

Earlier this month, the WSDA attempted to locate an Asian giant hornet nest by gluing a radio tag to another captured "murder hornet."

"Gluing tracking tags is usually done on honeybees, bumble bees, things like that and some other insects. One of the neat things about hornets is they're not quite as hairy as those, so there's not much for the glue to grab onto," Spichiger said at the time, [as reported by KING-TV](#).

"So you do have to be very patient and wait till it dries, but when you're handling an Asian giant hornet, obviously it doesn't want you handling it, so you have to keep it chilled down."

Unfortunately, between the drying time, cooling from an icebox and the insect's own movements, the glue was unable to completely bond to the Asian giant hornet before making contact with its wings, ultimately resulting in the "murder hornet" being unable to fly.

News of this failure comes several weeks after [state officials revealed](#) that, in the 1,400 traps set across the state, only a single Asian giant hornet had been captured.

The specimen recovered from Whatcom County was found to be one of the smaller worker Asian giant hornets observed by experts. The finding of Asian giant hornets smaller than their average length of 1.5 to 2 inches could mean that a number of "murder hornets" went overlooked by experts and concerned Washington residents.

Scientists have been racing against time, as colonies of the species tend to show more development in the months of August and September. Officials hope to be able to track down and destroy the colonies before they can spread and enter the "slaughter phase," in which a colony of Asian giant hornets can usurp a honeybee hive and make quick work of some 30,000 of the hive's previous occupants via decapitation, [according to the WSDA](#) and [National Geographic](#).

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Princeton to Pay Nearly \$1.2 Million to Female Professors Following Federal Discrimination Probe

by [Evan Craighead](#)

A federal probe has revealed that, between 2012 and 2014, female professors at Princeton University received less pay than their male counterparts with the same credentials and experience. Now, the prestigious university is set to fork over nearly \$1.2 million in back pay and salary bumps.

The US Department of Labor [announced earlier this month](#) that Princeton and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) had entered into an early resolution conciliation agreement following a yearslong probe.

"The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs is satisfied that Princeton University has pursued an early resolution conciliation agreement, and addressed the issues found in our review," said OFCCP Programs Director Craig E. Leen.

"Early resolution conciliation agreements are an effective tool for contractors to ensure equitable pay to employees, enhance internal salary equity reviews, and proactively correct any disparities uncovered."

[According to the agreement](#), Princeton did not honor its commitment to equal pay and employment opportunities between 2012 and 2014. The university has since agreed to pay a total of nearly \$1.2 million - \$925,000 in owed wages and at least \$250,000 in future salary adjustments - to female professors.

"Pay disparities existed for 106 female employees in the full professor position at Princeton University," the news release detailed.

"Princeton University is taking multiple proactive steps to promote pay equity and enhance its diversity initiatives that will help it comply with current federal laws," said Diana Sen, northeast regional director of the OFCCP. "We look forward to continuing to work cooperatively with Princeton to implement the agreement."

The agreement comes as a result of the department's investigation into allegations of compensation discrimination, which began in November 2018.

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DoJ Sues FLOTUS' Ex-BFF-Turned-Author, Claims Book Violates Non-Disclosure Agreement by [Evan Craighead](#)

The US Department of Justice claims the author of "Melania and Me: The Rise and Fall of My Friendship with the First Lady" breached her non-disclosure agreement (NDA) and that she failed to submit a draft copy of the book for government review.

The DoJ filed a lawsuit on Tuesday against 49-year-old Stephanie Winston Wolkoff, a former White House aide and close friend of first lady Melania Trump, claiming the contents of her recently published book broke a non-disclosure pact.

"The United States seeks to hold Ms. Wolkoff to her contractual and fiduciary obligations and to ensure that she is not unjustly enriched by her breach of the duties she freely assumed when she served as an adviser to the first lady," read the DoJ complaint, [as observed by Reuters](#). The complaint seeks to have profits from the book - published six weeks ago - set aside in a government trust.

In the book, "Wolkoff reveals how her friend of 15 years spearheaded 'Operation Block Ivanka' to ensure the president's eldest daughter didn't hog the limelight at the inauguration," [reported The Daily Beast](#).

Marc Kasowitz, a longtime attorney for US President Donald Trump, previously issued a letter to Wolkoff and publisher Simon & Schuster, alleging that she had violated a confidentiality clause within a Gratuitous Services Agreement signed between Melania Trump and herself on August 22, 2017.

"The Services Agreement prohibits Ms. Wolkoff from, among other things, disclosing her work for FLOTUS and the White House Office of the First Lady, as well as any information furnished to [her] by the Government under this Agreement, information about the First Family, or any other information about which [she] may become aware during the course of her performance," Kasowitz's letter states, according to The Daily Beast.

The DoJ complaint issued on Tuesday also cited the August 2017 agreement, noting it applied to "nonpublic, privileged and/or confidential information" Wolkoff obtained during the time of her service.

"This was a contract with the United States and therefore enforceable by the United States," DoJ spokeswoman Kerri Kupec told Reuters.

"I did not break the NDA," said Wolkoff during a September appearance on ABC's "The View." "I've been working with First Amendment lawyers the entire time, pre-publishing lawyers, so this was handled extremely carefully," she added.

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Pro-Trump Ad Once Again Features Footage of Non-Americans, This Time From Russia, Belarus
by [Evan Craighead](#)

Like several other recent pro-Trump advertisements, a new, 30-second TV spot relies on foreign stock footage while taking shots at Democratic presidential nominee and former US Vice President Joe Biden.

America First Action, a group that has reportedly raised \$82 million toward the reelection of US President Donald Trump, debuted a major ad last week in Florida, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin that is dubbed "Pandemic Tax," [Politico reported](#).

The footage warns of "HIGHER TAXES ON EVERY INCOME GROUP" while [showing stock footage](#) that is currently available for \$65 via user Kmikhidov on the website Pond5. It's also up for purchase [on Shutterstock](#), linking to the [Facebook page of Konstantin Mikhidov](#), a resident of Novosibirsk, Russia.

Seconds later, the advertisement features a short clip of a woman that is available on [Getty Images' iStock](#) as "Old woman looking out the window stock video." "Belarus Videos," "Non US Location Videos" and "Caucasian Ethnicity Videos" are listed as tags for the footage.

"HIGHER TAXES ON MIDDLE CLASS RETIREMENT" is overlaid on the woman's face in the group's video.

"Clearly they trusted but did not verify the stock footage," said Max Steele, a spokesperson for pro-Democratic super PAC American Bridge, to Politico, ironically invoking a Russian expression.

This comes as one of several Trump reelection advertisements that have been called out for using footage of folks outside the US.

Sputnik [reported last month](#) that Trump's campaign was touting the "GREAT AMERICAN COMEBACK" while using video footage of a Ukrainian wallpaper warehouse. Furthermore, Ukrainian production studio Stockbusters revealed that a woman seen in the video was Ukrainian, and the associated footage was filmed in Ukraine.

Prior to that ad, the Trump campaign team [selected fiery footage](#) from protests along Roger de Flor Street in Barcelona, Spain, in October 2019, to represent "Biden's America."

The campaign also [issued a newsletter](#) to supporters of the GOP nominee, vowing to protect the Christ the Redeemer statue of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from "angry mobs" who were protesting and toppling post-Civil War Confederate monuments, statues of white leaders who kept enslaved Africans and other structures viewed as celebrations of racist and otherwise problematic practices.

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'I Don't Feel Like Dying Today': US Jogger Records Terrifying Encounter With Cougar
Screenshot/Instagram
by [Victoria Teets](#)

A Utah man recently survived a terrifying encounter with a mother mountain lion while jogging along a park trail.

On Saturday, Kyle Burgess, 26, accidentally came across mountain lion cubs in Slate Canyon while jogging along a trail. Before he knew it, the mother cougar began approaching him, and the encounter quickly escalated to her chasing and charging at him.

Burgess recorded the six-minute incident with the cougar. During the nerve-wracking, expletive-filled clip, Burgess makes loud noises, roars and walks away slowly in order to avoid the massive feline, which follows him while staying at a distance.

"No, no, go away, please go away," Burgess says as he backs away from the cougar. "Come on, dude, I don't feel like dying today," he adds, as the cat keeps steadily approaching.

In the video, the cougar is seen and heard hissing and charging the lone trail runner in a bid to scare him off.

"This is scary. My heart is racing. Dude, OK. This is not fun," Burgess says on the video as the cougar growls. "Go away! Go away! Go back to your babies!"

[In an interview with KSL Newsradio](#), Burgess said he has been trail-running for years and has plenty of experience on the Slate Canyon Trail. While he has seen bobcats, he told the outlet, "This is the first time I have ever encountered a mountain lion."

He said that he didn't think that animal followed him out of hunger, but rather because of a desire to protect her young.

"Right as I knew what she was, a cougar coming up on me, I decided I needed to get away from her babies."

Although Burgess has never had any formal training on such situations, he had done online research on keeping safe on the trails and spoken with hunters about what to do if he came across a dangerous animal.

"Don't run away. Be the bigger thing that's out there," he said they told him.

During his six-minute ordeal with the mother cougar, Burgess made himself look big, never turned his back, made loud noises and eventually tossed a rock at the animal, after which she fled.

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Sickening Smooch - Political Cartoon

US President Donald Trump told his supporters during his first rally since his diagnosis and treatment for COVID-19 that he is now “immune” to the novel coronavirus, and that he wanted to give everyone in the crowd a “big fat kiss.”

On Monday, Trump addressed nearly 7,000 attendees at his Sanford, Florida, rally.

“They say I’m immune. I feel so powerful,” Trump told the crowd. “I’ll walk into that audience, I’ll walk in there, kiss everyone in that audience. I’ll kiss the guys and the beautiful women.”

“They say you’re immune. I don’t know for how long. Some people say for life, some people say for four months,” he said.

The offer likely rang hollow to folks in the audience, as [some 215,500 Americans have died](#) from the disease so far. Perhaps it would be no worse than taking Trump up on his January 2016 statement that he was so popular, he could “[stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody](#)” and not lose any voters.